

KEY VOTE ALERT!



Congressional & Public Affairs
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE:

The United States Senate is scheduled to vote shortly on legislation to implement S. 1307, the U.S.-Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA). The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing more than three million businesses of every size, sector and region, strongly supports this landmark agreement, which will bring tangible commercial benefits to American workers, farmers, and companies.

DR-CAFTA will create the largest new FTA market in over a decade. Americans already export more than \$15.7 billion each year in U.S. products to Central America and the Dominican Republic — more than we sell to India, Indonesia, and Russia combined.

Best of all, this agreement will provide a level playing field for American workers and farmers, ensuring that we get the full benefit of trade with this dynamic market. More than 20 years ago, the United States unilaterally opened its market to these six countries, and nearly everything we import from them enters our market duty free. On the other hand, when American workers and farmers sell their goods to Central America, they face average tariffs in the 7-11% range (and higher).

DR-CAFTA will correct this unfair trade imbalance by eliminating tariffs on 80% of U.S. manufactured goods and 50% of U.S. agricultural exports immediately while phasing out most remaining tariffs over a few years. In fact, a Chamber study covering 15 states found that DR-CAFTA will create 25,000 new jobs and \$4 billion in new sales in its first year.

But the case for DR-CAFTA goes beyond business — and beyond trade. The last time Central America loomed on the agenda in Washington was during the civil wars of the 1980s. Today, these are democracies and free market economies. Passing DR-CAFTA will help Central America build on the progress of the past 20 years.

When the Senate considers DR-CAFTA, we urge you to strengthen the position of American workers, farmers, and businesses by casting a favorable vote. Because of the importance of this issue, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce will use votes on, or in relation to, DR-CAFTA in our annual "How They Voted" ratings.

Sincerely,

R. Bruce Josten